

Double-Checking Income Eligibility Forms (IEFs) Can Save You Money



Handy Helper #6



One of the most common problems found at centers during reviews and audits is that Income Eligibility Forms (IEFs) are not classified into the correct category (Free, Reduced, or Paid). When IEFs are misclassified, money can be taken back from the center. Below are some suggestions to save your center money and eliminate frustration. If you have any questions about the IEFs, please talk to a **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** staff person at (303) 692-2330.

- ◆ Parents or guardians must sign and date the IEF. Also, the center eligibility official must authorize the IEF by signing and dating it.
- ◆ **An IEF is valid only for one year from the date the center authorizes it.** For example, if the center date is 9/03, the form is valid through 8/04.
- ◆ IEFs are valid retroactive to the first day of the month the center authorizes the IEF.
- ◆ Remember to double-check IEFs for accuracy.
- ◆ The center needs to determine the category of the IEF— either “Free” or “Reduced” or “Paid.” Use the **Household Income Guidelines** which are revised every July 1 and are effective through June 30 of the following year. Redoing your IEFs in July may increase your reimbursement.

- ◆ Put first and last names on the IEF (and Record of Meals Served) in order to eliminate confusion between children. Nicknames, abbreviations, initials, etc., are not acceptable.
- ◆ The total number of persons in the household must equal the number of names listed on the IEF.
- ◆ Income must be listed separately, by source, for all members of the household with income.
- ◆ The total income must be calculated correctly and placed in the total box by the center. Also, check (✓) whether it is a weekly, monthly, or annual income.
- ◆ A Social Security Number (SSN) must be listed for the adult household member who signs the form, or the word “NONE” must be written on the IEF, if the adult does not have a SSN.
- ◆ Any child receiving Food Stamps or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) automatically falls into the “Free” category. However, this applies only if the case number is listed on the IEF and the parent or guardian has signed and dated it. In this case, do not list household members, Social Security Numbers, or income.
- ◆ An IEF stating “zero” income must be updated within **45 days**. The IEF should show some type of income after 45 days, such as a loan or grant, household income if living with grandparents,

parents or friends, cash received from relatives or friends, etc.

- ◆ **Children may not be claimed “Free” or “Reduced” before the center eligibility official signs and dates the IEF form.** If the IEFs are not updated before they expire, the children would have to be claimed in the “Paid” category until new IEFs are approved.
- ◆ Valid IEFs must be on file for three years and four months past the current fiscal year for all children whose meals are being claimed in the “Free” or “Reduced” categories.
- ◆ Students who receive college financial assistance should list only the amount of money that is left over after costs for tuition, fees, books and school supplies have been paid.
- ◆ All center’s approval dates must be written with month/year such as 9/03.
- ◆ **If no income at all is listed on the IEF, you must claim that child in the “Paid” category.**
- ◆ Foster children (see other side).

Remember to double-check IEFs for accuracy!

(OVER)

IEFs for Foster Children:

- ◆ Foster children are considered a household of “one” and the income should not include foster family income, i.e., wages, etc.
- ◆ An IEF must be filled out for each individual foster child and each child is considered a family of one. Even when there are siblings with the same guardian, each child should have an individual IEF and is considered a family of one.
- ◆ Funds provided by Social Services, which are specifically identified by category for personal use of the child such as clothing, school fees, and allowances, are counted as income. Funds identified for shelter and care, and medical and therapeutic needs are not considered as income for the child. Where Social Services funds cannot be identified by category, no portion of the provided funds is considered as income.
- ◆ The IEF must be signed by an adult member of the foster home. A social security number is not needed for the foster child’s IEF.